

NBIAA

Northern Burlington Instructional Athletic Association
P.O. Box 334, Columbus, New Jersey 08022

2012 Major Softball Rules (5th-7th grades, 10-13* years old)

**You must be 12 years of age on or before January 1.*

Northern Burlington Babe Ruth Softball League

GOAL: To instruct the fundamentals of the game of softball to eleven and twelve year old children, while providing time for them to recreate and have fun.

Playing Rules: As adopted by the Babe Ruth Softball and amended by agreement of participating township representatives.

Exceptions to Babe Ruth Softball Rules:

THE GAME

1. **This is a Fast Pitch League. Rules governing the game play and the pitching techniques are taken from the Babe Ruth Softball.**
2. Weeknight games will start at 6:00 PM. Pre-game field warm-ups must be no longer than 10 minutes for each team. The home team has the field 20 minutes before the game starts, while the visiting team has the field 10 minutes before the start of the game.
3. The home team coach will notify the visiting team coach within a reasonable amount of time if the game must be postponed for weather or field conditions. **A 1-hour minimum is required.** *The Coach of the home team is responsible to reschedule all make-ups before the end of the season. Coaches must notify their coordinator of any postponed games within one week of the cancellation. If no notification is made, both teams will be charged with a loss. If only one team is unavailable within this time frame, it shall be charged with a loss. In this case, the opposing team coach (available to play) must notify their coordinator who must notify the league immediately for verification.*
4. A regulation game will consist of 6 innings. Extra innings will be played until a winner is determined. There will be a **2-hour limit**.
5. After 2 hours of play, *if the game is called the score will revert back to the last completed inning if 4 innings are completed and will count as a game.* If the umpire suspends the game before this time, see 7 below.
6. Any games called by the umpire due to darkness or poor field conditions, before 4 innings are played, or 3-1/2 innings if the home team is winning, will be re-scheduled and played as a new game.
7. Any games called by the umpire due to darkness or poor field conditions after 5 innings are played, or 4-1/2 innings if the home team is winning, is complete. If the score is tied, the game will be rescheduled but the game will continue from the point of suspension. The suspended game will be complete when the full inning has been played. If the score is still tied, an additional full inning will be played until the tied score is no longer tied. It is recommended these suspended games be completed immediately before the next scheduled game between the two teams.
8. The game will end by a 10 run rule **option, 15 mandatory** after competing a minimum of 4 innings.
9. The half inning ends when 3 outs are made or 5 runs are scored.
10. The field shall be set with anchored bases at 60 feet and the pitching rubber at 40 feet from home plate.
11. The home team provides 2 game balls. **Official 12"** ball must be used.

PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

1. The entire roster bats from the beginning of the game. Each coach will provide the umpire and opposing coach with the batting order before the start of the game. A player who arrives after the game starts must be placed at the bottom of the batting order. There is no limit on the number of players on a team roster.
2. A minimum of 9 players per team is required to start a game. After the game is started, a team may continue with 8 players, only if the player(s) were removed due to injury. The umpire will declare a forfeit by the team unable to meet the minimum rule regardless of the score.
3. Ten fielders will consist of the following positions: Pitcher, Catcher, First Baseman, Second Baseman, Shortstop, Third Baseman, Left Fielder, Center Fielder, Right Fielder, and Short Fielder. The outfielders and short fielder can be positioned anywhere within the boundaries of the outfield. The outfield must be designated as the outfields grass if the infield is dirt. If no such division exists, the outfield will start at a 15'ark beyond first, second, and third base.
4. Each player in attendance must play a minimum of 2 innings in the field during a game. There is free defensive substitution throughout the game.
5. There is no limit on the amount of times a player can be a defensive substitute.
6. Call up players from Minors. Registered rostered Minor level players may be called up, should a team not have enough players to field a team. Playing time for the call up player must not exceed the playing time of the team's regular major players. For the regionalized program, the head coach will make arrangements with their township's minor level coaches to determine their potential call up players.

PITCHING

1. This is a fast pitch league. Intentional slow pitch "arc" is prohibited. After a one per team warning, the illegal pitch will be called a ball regardless of pitch location.
2. Each pitcher is allowed a maximum of 4 innings per game. ***The pitcher can only return to pitch one time, with maximum of 4 innings per game. 7th grade pitchers which are 12 years of age before the cut off date are allowed 4 innings per game.***
3. Pitchers MUST pitch to at least one batter at 40 feet before being moved up to 35 feet. They can only move to 35 feet if they cannot reach the plate at 40 feet. No pitcher may pitch from closer than 35 feet. Coaches must agree that a pitcher be allowed to move up to 35 feet.

BATTING AND BASE RUNNING

1. The batter and all runners must wear a helmet at the start of each pitch. The batter or runner must request and receive a time out from the umpire, to retrieve a lost helmet before the start of the next play.
2. The umpire will issue one warning to the team whose first batter throws a bat. If any other violations occur by that team, the umpire will declare a dead ball and the batter is called out.
3. Sliding is optional. However, a non-sliding runner cannot crash into a fielder attempting to make a play. **No** headfirst slides are allowed at any base. If either of these occurs, the umpire will declare a dead ball and the base runner are called out.
4. Base stealing is permitted. Base runners may not leave the base until ***the ball crosses the plate.*** Runners leaving early are called out and remaining base runners must return to the base occupied before that pitch was thrown. Only ONE successful steal of home is permitted per inning. A runner may advance from 3rd to home (even if 1 successful steal has occurred) if an attempt at 3rd is made on a runner stealing from 2nd.
5. A runner may NOT advance to home between the pitcher/catcher exchange if 1 successful steal has occurred in the inning.
6. Bunting is permitted.

7. Once the opposing pitcher has possession of the ball within an 8' radius of the pitching rubber, *the ball is called dead*. The base runner(s) cannot advance if on a base. Runners in between bases *must go back to previous base if less than half way*. If no play is made on the runner, the ball is called dead once the runner reaches a base. However, since the ball remains live until all runners are on a base, the pitcher may elect to make an attempt on the runner. If so, the ball will remain live.
8. The "third drop strike" rule is not in effect. A batter is automatically out even if the catcher drops a third strike.
9. The Infield Fly Rule is in effect in the NB Major Softball division.
- ** A drop-third strike rule and stealing on release rule might be instituted into the league after game 6 games of the regular season if the talent pool can properly handle this rule change and coaches agree to the change.

FOOTWEAR

1. Plastic spikes or cleats are allowed, but not mandatory.
2. Metal spikes or cleats are not permitted.

COACHES

1. Manager/Coaches: There should be one Manager, two Coaches, and one score keeper on the bench. Managers and Coaches should wear a uniform or shirt that represents their township and identifies them as a manager or coach.
2. All coaches should be Rutgers SAFETY trained and should pass the on-line Babe Ruth Baseball coach certification course.

UMPIRES

1. **Umpire(s) will be assigned through the league. If an umpire does not arrive for the game, either volunteer parents or assistant coaches should umpire the game to the best of their ability.**
2. There will be no protests. The umpire call is final.
3. The home team coach prior to the start of the game will explain the typical ground rules for each field. The umpire will decide any disagreement of the field ground rules between team coaches.

UN-SPORTSMAN LIKE CONDUCT

1. Team coaches are responsible for the conduct of their players and spectators. Taunting is strictly prohibited. The offended team coach will discuss with the umpire any incidence felt to be offensive. If the umpire concurs, a team warning will be issued. Further offenses by that team will result in ejection of the player(s), or coach (es) from the game or field by the umpire decision.

PLAYOFF AND CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES

1. Regular season won/lost records will determine playoff rankings. Records will be based on a minimum of 12 games. Win = 5 pts., Tie = 3 pts and Loss = 1 pt. The highest ranked team will be the home team. All teams will be eligible for the playoffs.
2. Score books must be maintained for every game.
3. The home team coach will notify *Their Sports Coordinator* with the results of each game.
4. **Rule 8 under "the game" is not effective in playoffs. The 2-hour limit is not in effect during playoffs, the game will continue until a winner is declared.**